

Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

Dallas/Ft. Worth

September 1990

MCCC NEWS

Volume 8 Issue 9

SIGGRAPH

A Report by Bill Raecke

First I need to answer a quick question. What is SIGGRAPH? SIGGRAPH is an annual computer and computer peripheral show whose focus is on graphics. The location changes from year to year. This year we were fortunate enough to have it right here in Dallas. Since, as we all know, the Amiga is an outstanding graphic engine, it was a treat to be able to attend and see how our favorite machine stacks up against the competition. Those of us who attended also got a sneak peek at some of the latest hardware and software available -- or soon to be available.

You need to understand that this is a BIG show. Any manufacturer who has anything to do with computer graphics is on hand. To write a detailed report of the show would take a lot more space than is available in this newsletter. I will only attempt to cover the things that particularly interested me, and then only briefly.

Commodore had a large booth at the show with a lot of products being demoed. As far as Amiga's were concerned, only 2500's and 3000's were on hand. The extra power of the 68030 processor allows the Amiga to stack up quite well when compared to the high priced competition at the show. Dale Luck was there with his X-Windows product. The University of Lowell graphics card was installed on one Amiga allowing it to display a image from a 16 million color palette. ASDG was there with The Art Department - Professional.

Impulse was on hand showing their soon-to-be-released new ray-tracing animation package, Imagine. It looks to be very powerful and much more easy to use than its predecessor, Turbo-Silver. If the power of Turbo is any indication, Imagine should soon become the the major player in the ray-tracing arena. Move over Sculpt 4D.

Also on hand were the publishers of Animation: Journeyman, another high end ray-tracing animation package. That package is already available for sale but don't go looking for it at your local dealer. It will be direct marketed only. This decision, unless reversed, means that Animation: Journeyman probably won't be around for long since I can't Imagine a lot of people plunking down \$500 on a mail-order program when they can try out the competition

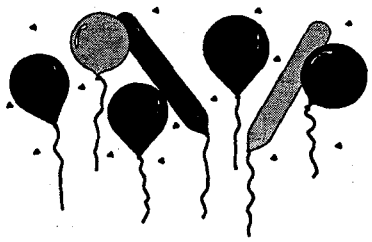
at a dealer before buying. Too bad, because judging from the demo I saw this product could be a major contender.

Also on display at the Commodore booth was CDTV. For those who don't know what it is, CDTV is a new product that is designed to be part of a total home education/entertainment center. It looks like a VCR, runs on compact digital disks containing almost 700 Megs of data, and contains the heart of an Amiga 500 to make it all go. This was my first "up close and personal" contact with it and it is quite impressive.

On the other end of the show there was one more display featuring the Amiga. It was the NewTek booth featuring the long awaited Video-Toaster. The Toaster has been promised for so many years now that it has become almost a joke. But judging from the impressive live demonstration, the Penn and Teller video, and the huge crowds of people gathered around, NewTek will be having the last laugh. The Toaster is able to take a live video signal and manipulate it in many different ways in real time. And does it all at a fraction of the cost of comparable systems. Bundled with the Toaster is a 3D ray-tracing and animation package, LightWave 3D, and a video paint system, ToasterPaint. Both operate in 24 bit planes.

There were other non-Commodore displays of interest as well. I had my first look at HD-TV at the Sony display. They had a large screen rear-projection television displaying a television image at a resolution of 1024 x 768. The picture had the definition and clarity of a movie. All I can say is - I want one. Anyone interested in a 1 gigabyte optical re-writable disk? Panasonic had one on display - a 5 1/4 in disk format. Also from Panasonic was a new color printer that uses a variable dot size technology to virtually eliminate the dot pattern which would typically be found on a 200 dpi color image. The output is unbelievably clear with 4,096 printed colors possible.

The only major disappointment was that there were very few Amiga's represented. The only ones I saw were at the Commodore booth, the NewTek booth, and the University of Lowell booth. The show seemed to be dominated by MAC's. After looking around for a while, the reason becomes quite apparent. Commodore needs to find a



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The Game of Harmony

A New Kind of Action Game from Accolade
Amiga Review by Bill Raecke

Harmony is an unusual new action game from Accolade. It is unusual because in this game there are no aliens to kill, there is no faster-than-possible car to drive, there are no jets to pilot. The point of this game, according to the documentation is to provide "a challenge that demands total relaxation for optimal performance. A game that's more like a meditation than a rabid exercise in intergalactic gunplay."

Actually, I hesitate to call it an action game. It's more like a puzzle with a time limit. Let me see if I can explain. You control THE SEEKER. THE SEEKER is a sphere with

"...a challenge that demands total relaxation for optimal performance. A game that's more like a meditation than a rabid exercise in intergalactic gunplay."

a pointer on it. The world consists of a screen with barriers in various positions on the screen and some number of Spheres that are pulsating with energy. The goal is to push together like-colored Spheres before they explode. When you successfully push them together they will vanish in a state of synergy. When all like colored Spheres have been pushed together you may move on to the next level. Sounds easy, right? Let me lead you through the first level. (My apologies. I tried to capture a screen so that this could be accompanied by a picture but was unsuccessful.) The first level has its barriers in the shape of a capital H. There are just four Spheres on this level. There are two of one color

to the left of the H and there are two of another color to the right of the H. Each pair is connected by a rubber band. The effect of the rubber band is to try to hold the Spheres which it connects at a set distance apart. It will stretch or compress, becoming either longer or shorter, but it will try to return to the original distance. Let's bump into one of the Spheres, pushing it closer to the other in the pair. Now the Sphere at the other end of the rubber band moves in response to the pressure that the rubber band places on it by trying to return to the original distance. Both Spheres are now in motion. The barriers will cause the Spheres or THE SEEKER to rebound much like a cushion on a pool table. If one of the two Spheres in motion happens to travel off of the edge of the screen, it will appear on the opposite side. When it does, it does not pull the other with it by the rubber band. Instead, the rubber band is redrawn between the two, and they go wildly careening toward each other as the rubber band snaps back into shape. This can be good if they strike each other -- more often they will miss. Beginning to sound not quite so easy?

While all this is happening, remember that the Spheres are pulsing more and more quickly heading toward explosion. You have about 30 seconds at the early levels to push the matching Spheres together. This time decreases in higher levels. To make matters even worse, if you should happen to push two different-colored Spheres together they will generate a Pod of a third color. This Pod appears to be a small Sphere. For three seconds, you can run over the Pod -- it will disappear and you will be awarded energy. But after three seconds it will grow into another Sphere. This can get totally out of control very quickly.

There are 50 levels. Not all Spheres are connected by rubber bands. But sometimes Spheres of different colors are tied together. Sometimes three or more Spheres are tied

...Continued on page 5

SIGGRAPH

Continued From Page 1

solution for the lack of available colors. Most of the computers on display were displaying 256 colors from a palette of 16,777,216. The Amiga can display 4,096 using HAM mode, but the palette only consists of 4,096. That is simply not enough in today's market. If Commodore were to refine the chip set so that 16,777,216 colors were available, a 256 color standard screen was available, and the already superior graphic handling capabilities of the Amiga were retained -- the result would be unbeatable. And in my opinion, retaining those graphic handling capabilities is

extremely important. We don't want to add the additional colors at the expense of current capabilities -- that would make us just another one of the pack. The extra colors need to come not as a separate card operating outside the domain of the custom chips, but be part of the custom chip set so that those screens can still be manipulated by the blitter as they are today.

So much for the editorial. At any rate, SIGGRAPH was well worth the trip. If you missed it this time, be sure to attend the next time it comes to town.

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together. Sometimes THE SEEKER will be rubber-banded with one or more Spheres. Sometimes Spheres will be rubber-banded together across barriers. Lots of variables and lots of interest.

You begin the game with four lives. There is an energy bar across the top of the screen. Every Pod you consume increases your energy level. Every Sphere that explodes decreases your energy level. When your energy level goes to nothing, that life is forfeit.

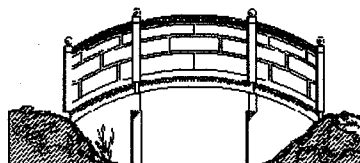
There are several playing options. THE SEEKER may be controlled with either a joystick or the keyboard. There is a two player mode. With two players, the game play is cooperative. Both players play the game simultaneously and they win or lose as a team. There is also a game mode called the "Mantra Mode" which can be played with either one or two players. In Mantra Mode, the Spheres do not pulsate and do not explode. This effectively removes the time limit from the game and most of the challenge. It is, however, an excellent way to practice.

The game disk is not copy protected and the game may be easily moved to a hard drive. There is manual protection, however. And the protection is rather poorly implemented in my opinion. The protection key is printed on dark purple paper with black ink. This combination makes it difficult to xerox the documentation -- but it also makes it almost impossible to read as well. To make matters worse, the key consists of a series of pictures (24 in all). On these pictures are a series of Spheres and Pods in various positions on a screen area. To decipher the code you must match the

patterns in the manual with the screen shot which will be displayed and enter the appropriate number. Remember that the manual is almost impossible to read to begin with -- now you must match the pattern of a series of Spheres on the screen to the pattern in that manual. The typical key screen has twelve Spheres and Pods. You have three tries. You will need them. Plan on spending a couple of minutes trying to get into the game each time you want to play. Once, earlier tonight, I missed three times in a row and had to reboot. This was after spending several minutes examining pictures.

How do I like the game? I think it's a lot of fun. The manual says that Harmony "demands total relaxation" and that it's "like a meditation". Don't expect the kind of relaxation that will lull you to sleep. Meditation may come closer to describing it. It requires a kind of relaxed concentration. Wild movements will harm rather than help. If you panic, you are done for. Harmony requires that you perform surely, quickly and calmly.

The graphics are first rate. The animation is smooth and the action and interaction of the objects is consistent and natural. The sound is relaxing and quite appropriate. All in all, it's a terrific game. Now if they'd just fix the protection...



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The MCCC SuperDisk Collection

Library Information
From Harold Williams

This article is the second in a series of articles describing the MCCC SuperDisk Collection. The MCCC SuperDisk Collection currently consists of 13 disks. Each SuperDisk is packed with outstanding utilities selected from the MCCC Amiga Library (about 900 disks). This month I will describe the contents of SD-WBUtil. This was one of the first SuperDisks. It contains 17 terrific utilities to enhance the Amiga WorkBench and CLI.

This first and probably most important item to be found on this disk is ARP. The AmigaDOS Resource Project (version 1.3) is almost a complete replacement of standard AmigaDOS. Because the ARP commands are written in assembler they are smaller and faster than normal

"A complete installation of the ARP commands and ASH will save about 70K of space on your WorkBench disk"

AmigaDOS. The ARP commands are highly compatible with AmigaDOS and many commands are enhanced. ARP also includes a terrific shell called ASH. The ARP shell has many script commands "built in" allowing you to delete them from your C: directory. A complete installation of the ARP commands and ASH will save about 70K of space on your WorkBench disk. ARP comes with a slick installation program that makes complete or partial conversion to the ARP system painless. Excellent documentation is included.

ConMan provides a very useful console handler for CLI users. ConMan (Console Manager) provides command line editing and history. Although these features are now included in Commodore's shell, ConMan is still useful to have around. ConMan's editing features are more powerful than the standard shell and the command history is implemented in a more reasonable way. ConMan also has several window control and editing features assigned to the function keys. It is particularly nice to be able to shrink the CLI to a tiny window, or expand it to full size, and then have the CLI window return to its original size all with just the press of a function key.

LS is another utility for CLI users. This little jewel can replace both DIR and LIST. LS will display directories in just about any format and sequence. Place LS in your C: directory, add a couple of ALIAS commands to Shell-StartUp and you will have total control over directory listings.

Mkddir is the command that Commodore forgot to include in AmigaDOS. Mkddir will create a new directory

(like MakeDir) and build a drawer icon. Two drawer icons are built-in.

PPMore is a replacement for More, the text display program found in the utility drawer. PPMore allows total control when scrolling through a document. Scrolling forward or backward can be controlled with the mouse or the cursor keys. PPMore will also print documents. A unique feature of PPMore is its ability to display text files that have been packed using PowerPacker. Another text file reader included on SD-WBUtil is QView. QView is tiny, less than 4K (More is over 11K), yet it is full featured. QView even provides a search capability.

PPrefs is a replacement for the Preferences program. All of the features of the normal WorkBench preference program are included but this utility is only 19K instead of 56K in size. Replacing Preferences with PPrefs will save about 37K of space. PPrefs also provides support for overscan size screens. Another preferences utility included on this SuperDisk is Prefs. Prefs will allow you to set preferences "on the fly". Use Prefs to save various preferences settings then use Prefs to load them back in. You can also save just the pointer image. A third preferences utility is QuicPref. QuicPref lets you adjust all the printer preferences settings on one small screen.

Print is a utility (written by our very own Bill Raecke) that provides a nice intuition style interface for printing text files. Control of print style, pitch, line size, etc. is just a button click away. Lots of nice features.

PROTeCTA is a utility that offers a WorkBench interface for setting the protection bits on a file. This is much easier than using the CLI Protect command.

QED is a full featured text editor. Everything can be done with menus and nice requestors. This version does restrict the file size until you send in your shareware contribution.

QMouse is a bundle of amazing utilities in one small (4K) package. QMouse runs in the background and provides a screen blanker, pointer blanker, mouse accelerator, automatic window activation, configurable hot keys, keystroke recorder, window to front or back without using gadgets, screen shuffler, and a tiny clock with memory meter. These functions can be configured to work a variety of ways. Each function can also be selected to be on or off.

ShowFont will display all 256 characters of a typical font. The built-in file requestor will display your Fonts: directory along with the available sizes for each font.

Sweep is a utility that will attempt to free memory that was allocated by a previous task but never released. Sweep will also free memory used by libraries that are not currently in use.

TBar allows you to change the appearance of the window title bars. Five new patterns are built in, but you

When GEOS Crashes

C64 Information

From the Newsletter of the Sacramento C= Club

Is your mother-in-law coming for an indefinite stay? Is your spayed cat expecting for the second time this year? Did you just tear up your ticket on a 100 to 1 shot and then find out your horse really won? Have you ever had GEOS 64 crash and been unable to recover all that data in the RAM drive (REU-17xx) that you have been working on for hours? I can't help you with the first three, but the emotional anguish involved is similar for all four. Cheer up. I can help you with the GEOS problem.

If you have been using GEOS 64 very much, chances are you have had problems of not being able to recover your RAM drive data because either you forgot to save your current configuration or forgot to move your drives back to the configuration that was set on booting when using a three-drive system. Upon loading RBOOT, a drive error light starts flashing and laughing at you or GEOS starts to reboot from the RAM drive and then while you hold your breath, a requester box appears, with something like, "DISK ERROR Drive B etc." and you break down in tears.

My normal configuration is drive A (1581, #8), drive B (RAM drive), drive C (1571, #10). On numerous occasions, a crash for some reason or another has caused me to break down in tears or kick myself all over the room because I forgot! I thought and thought and tried all sorts of things to overcome this loathsome heart-breaking dilemma and the answer is so simple, I am probably the only person in the world who doesn't know it, but then I have always been a little slow.

I have known for quite some time that when you swap drive, GEOS automatically changes device numbers (so that drive A is always #8, B is #9, and C is #10) no matter what the drive switches are set at. Have you figured it out yet?

The trick is to software change the device numbers so that they represent a configuration that GEOS is looking for. This BASIC program will do the job nicely:

```
10 input "old device number";od
20 input "new device number";nd
30 if nd<8 or nd>30 then 20
40 open 15,od,15,"m-w:" chr$(119) chr$(0) chr$(2)
  chr$(32+nd) chr$(64+nd)
50 close 15
```

Save this to disk and when a crash occurs and you can't RBOOT, then load and run this program. Sometimes, under certain configurations, only a device change from 10 to 9 is necessary. Other configurations may require you to change 8 to 9 first, then change 10 to 8. Occasionally on ROOTing, you may have only two drives on line. Just reconfigure the drives (from GEOS configure routine) and be sure not to deselect the RAM drive or all will be lost. I have tested this under all possible drive configurations and it works.

The MCCC SuperDisk Collection

Continued From Page 6

can also design your on patterns.

TS is an incredibly fast text search program. It will search a file or directory for a text string. The search does not distinguish between upper and lower case unless a case sensitive search is specified. The search can be done in an interactive mode or as a summary report.

That concludes the list of utilities included on SD-WBUtil. This disk, along with the rest of the SuperDisk collection, is available every month at each of the MCCC Amiga chapter meetings. The SuperDisk collection also includes a WBUtil2 and WBUtil3. These disks are packed with even more terrific WorkBench and CLI enhancement programs. We'll talk about those next month.

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Amiga Library News

Public Domain and Shareware Picks From Bill Raecke

Drip by Art Skiles

Drip is your basic action game. It's a little like Pacman -- your character gets chased around a maze. Only this time the maze is a maze of pipes. And instead of collecting dots you are rusting pipes. Your character is a drip. (Is someone trying to tell me something?) You get to move to the next level after all the pipes on the current level have been rusted. There are 15 levels. And there are special bonus levels after level 3 and 9.

Of course, as with all games of this type, nothing is that simple. Along the way you have to avoid running into the acid, plasma and icecubes shooting out of pipes. You also have to avoid electric bubbles and coils and the crystal balls following you. Every once in a while a cloud will float by cleaning rust off the pipes. Bad news. That means you have to go back and clean them again. There is help too. A red heart balloon will cause the crystal balls to rust pipes. Other balloons will allow you to chase them. And

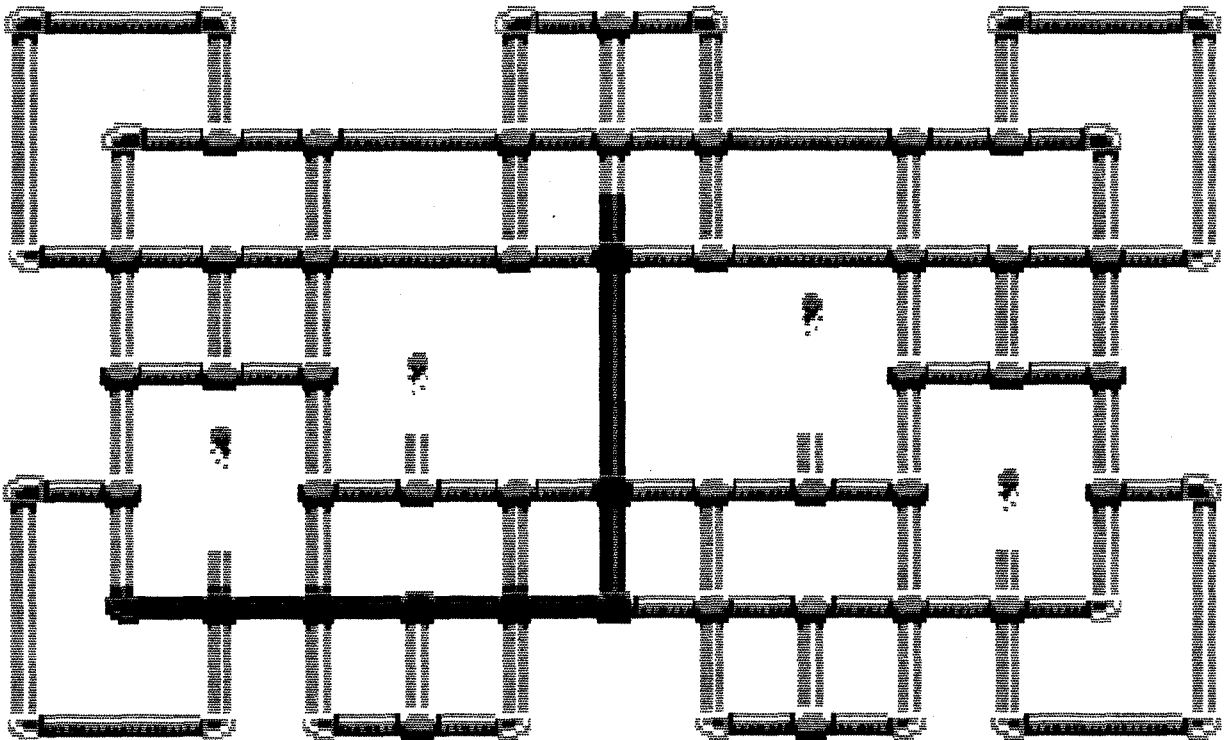
occasionally a bubble will float by. Hitch a ride and it will protect you from most enemies while allowing you to continue rusting pipes.

Nothing particularly new here. It's worth mentioning only because it's so well done. The art work is pleasing and the action is smooth. And the game play is challenging enough to keep me from getting very far. It has been released as public domain. You'll find it on MCCC-A_208.

SonixPatch by Fuller Computer Systems

This may be just what you're looking for. It will patch any program the illegally uses the ciaa.resource timer to correctly use the ciab.resource timer. You don't know what that means? Me neither. What I do know is that when you run the patch on Sonix or on the Sonix "Play" program, those programs will now run under AmigaDOS 2.0. The patch is actually advertised to work on any program that uses the ciaa.resource. The author claims to have

Drip 1 5 **bonus** 0 **Drip 2**
0001300 09250 0000000



successfully used it on Roger Rabbit to fix that program. I have used it on Sonix and Play myself and they still work under AmigaDOS 1.3 just fine. That may not sound like much of a test but if you visit the Fort Worth Amazing store you will see Sonix running successfully under 2.0. SonixPatch has been released as freely distributable copyrighted software and is available on MCCC-A_210.

MandelMountains 2.0 by Mathias Ortmann

I first wrote about MandelMountains in the March, 1990 issue of the MCCC News. It gives you the capability to render three-dimensional images of the Mandelbrot set. As there was then, there is a penalty to pay for these exceptional images. The renderings take an extremely long time. In return, however, you get images unlike those available from other Mandelbrot programs.

The basic program features remain the same. The program is capable of producing 32 color interlaced images in overscan. When saving an image as an IFF file an extra piece of information is placed into the file which allows it to be reloaded and used as a starting point for further exploration. New to version 2.0 is the addition of the Julia set, the addition of a Double Precision Mode for higher magnification factors, support for a 68881 or 68882 math coprocessor, automatic calculation of Depth and HZoom

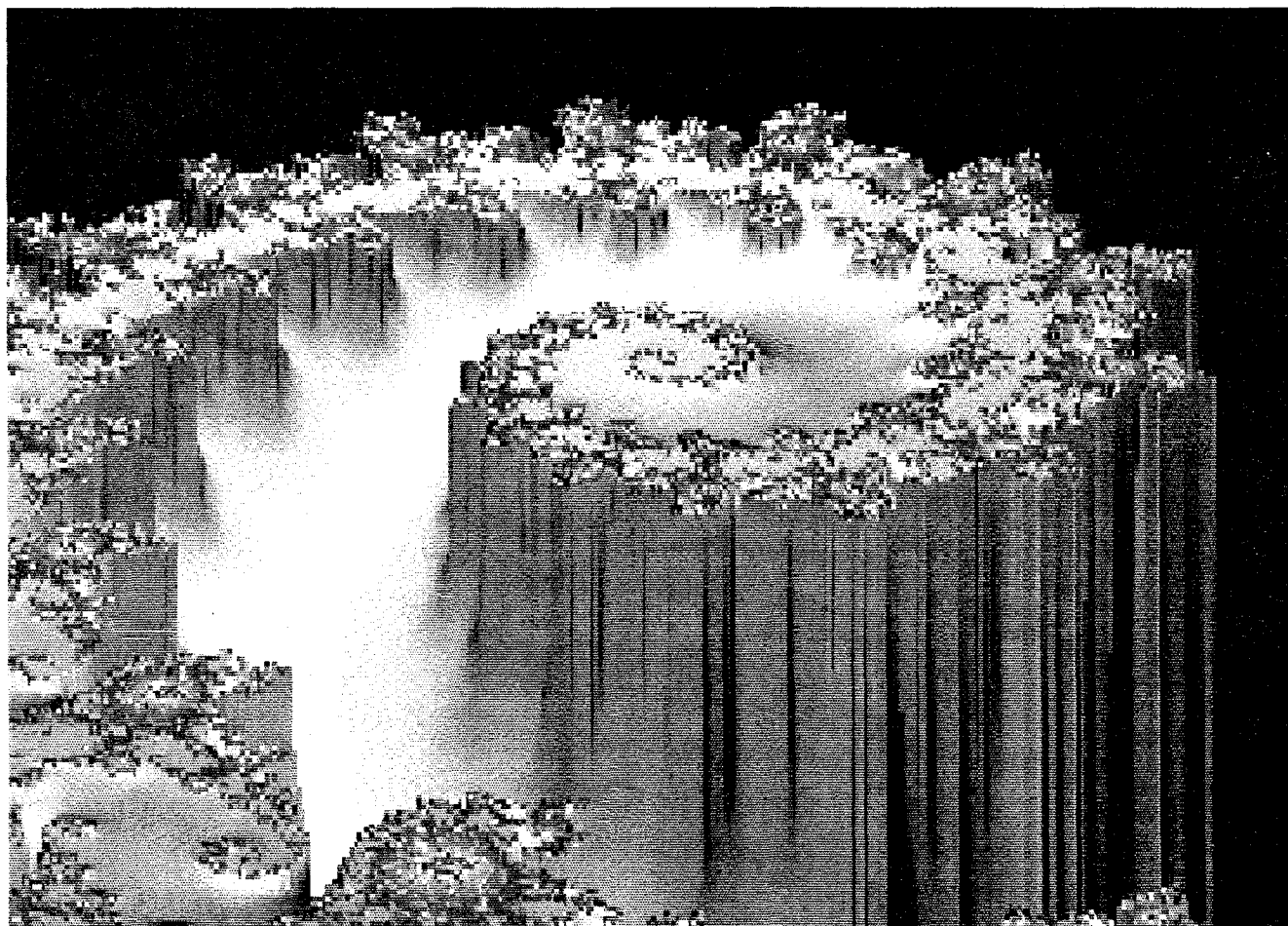
factors, and rendering that is about 10% faster than the last release.

Highly recommended for anyone interested in this kind of thing. MandelMountains is released as shareware. The requested donation is only \$10. Check it out. You'll find it on MCCC-A_211.

Flea Market

Fred Noble is looking for help with this year's Flea Market at METCOM 90.

If you can help - all day or for just a short while - give him a call at 817-838-5459.



METCOM 90

Multi-Media Now!

The MCCC is proud to present METCOM 90

METCOM 90 is coming to the Arlington Convention Center on Saturday, October 13, from 10:00 AM until 5:00 PM. Admission is free and the show is open to the general public. There will be over 10,000 square feet of show space and there are TWO theater spaces for presentations all day. Door prizes will be awarded throughout the day.

Dealers & Developers

The list of the dealers and developers who will be present in the display area has not yet been finalized. As of this writing, these companies have indicated that they will reserve booth space at METCOM 90.

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AmigaVision (Tentative)
CDTV (Tentative)
Marilyn Coughran (Amiga Artist)
Jim Pomeroy (UTA Video Arts Professor)
Gregg White (Graphic Video Consultant with MicroSearch)

(The List of companies attending and presentations are accurate as of printing date. They are subject to change.)

Special Attractions

There will be a special room set aside for VidSIG, the MCCC Video Special Interest Group. They will be demonstrating equipment and answering questions throughout the day.

This year door prizes will be awarded throughout the day. You will have to be present to win.

Gather up your used hardware and software for our flea market. The deal is the same as last year. Leave your items for sale with one of the flea market representatives **PRIOR TO THE DATE OF THE SHOW** along with the sale price. For all items sold, the MCCC will retain a 5% commission. For more information, contact Fred Noble (817-838-5459).

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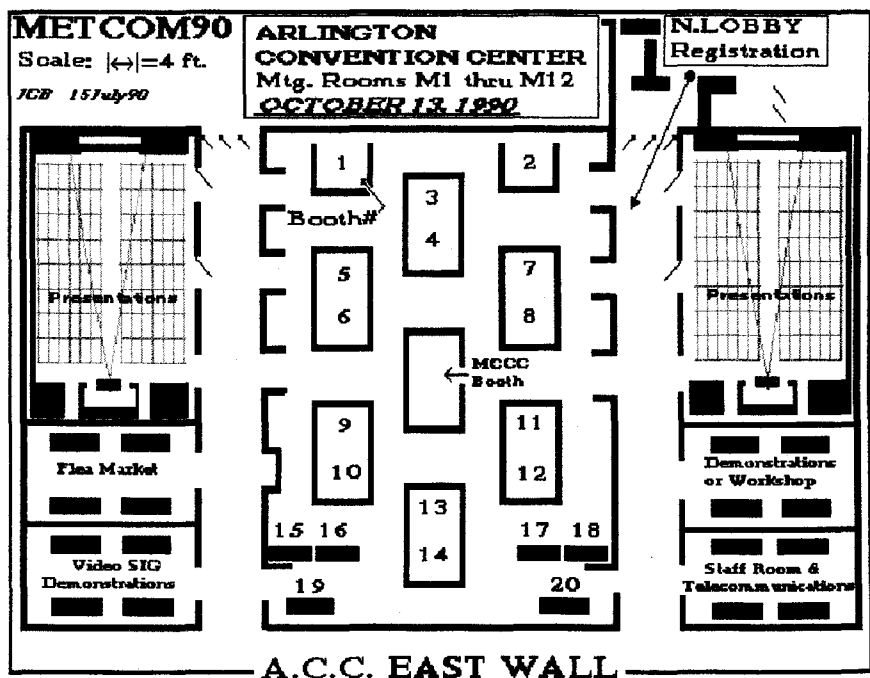
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The Boing! Optical Mouse

Amiga Hardware Review by David B. Johnson
From the Newsletter of BRACE

Although I seldom use the mouse to play games - with only an "occasional" exception when my wife thinks I am working hard on a new book - I do give my Amiga mouse some hardy exercise with my 10 hour per day use of Word Perfect. A few months ago I noticed that when I clicked the left mouse button, it did not always register. A couple of

"The mouse slides not on rollers but on two felt-like pads. This eliminates rollers and other moving parts and the subsequent cleaning and maintenance..."

months later I noticed that my dropping menus were not staying dropped while I held down the right mouse button. Even though I took the mouse apart and cleaned it, the problem with the right mouse button got worse. Computer hardware still tends to terrorize my normal rational processes, so it came slowly to me that the non-repairable contacts on my original Commodore A2000 mouse -- the only problem I have had with the A2000 -- were deteriorated and I needed a new mouse. Typical rolling ball mice were selling for a discounted price of around \$35 but I disliked the constant cleaning of hair, dried coke, smoke and crud of unknown origins from the rotating balls in my conventional mouse. I was elated when I read about the new Boing! Optical Mouse. I searched for thorough reviews of the optical mice but found only a brief one which was in a magazine article review of alternative mice. Although I would have preferred more information before making a decision, I went ahead and ordered one for a discounted price of about \$100.

After a few days of using the mouse, I became quite fond of the new creature. It operates by having a red light reflect off a blue metallic pad with a non-slip back. The mouse does not have to be positioned on any particular part of the pad. All movements are relative to its current position on the pad, just like the traditional mouse. The optical mouse, however, will not work on another pad or on any other surface. It has three buttons but the middle button has no use yet because no software supports it.

The buttons are a delight to use. They depress easily and emit an audible click for positive feedback. The mouse slides not on rollers but on two felt-like pads. This eliminates rollers and other moving parts and the subsequent cleaning and maintenance but it also gives a new feel to the mouse. Those Amigans who have been well trained by traditional mice will have to make some adjustments. At

first, moving the cursor with the optical mouse seems just a little strange. One does not have the quick, virtually effortless control with the new mouse that we had become accustomed to with the traditional mouse. However, after a few hours of use, our movements and those of the mouse appear natural and more smooth than with the previous rodent. The key to effective control of the optical mouse is a light touch and to exert as little downward pressure as possible. Use the thumb and pinky fingers to slide the mouse around and let the middle fingers rest gently on the buttons. In fact the mouse does not have to touch the pad in order to work. You can lift the mouse about one-quarter inch off the pad and it will still work fine. After a few hours you can move the pointer smoothly around the screen and obtain very precise and minute changes.

I have had the optical mouse about two months now and I don't have a single negative comment to make about it. If you use the mouse a lot and want a smooth functioning rodent with clearly audible clicks, a good "feel" and no maintenance, I can recommend it if you don't mind spending the extra money.

BC

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Go placidly among the line noise and baud rates, and remember what boredom there was before BBSing. As far as possible, do not covet your neighbor's HST. Answer your Email clearly and without typos, even to the needs that pester you, for they have something to say even if you can't figure out what it is.

Avoid female impersonators in chat, for they are dangerous to your ego. If you compare yourself to others, you may consider suicide; for there is always someone more proficient in Zmodem than yourself. Label your disks.

Keep interested in your own career, however humble; even after staying up all night downloading. Exercise caution in your business affairs; because you need the money to pay your time-sensitive online bills. But let this not blind you to the enjoyment there is on your local BBS; many persons strive for the most recent shareware; and uploads get you more time online.

Be yourself. Especially do not lie about your age or looks when responding to Email from "The SexyOne". Do not post messages in all caps. Neither be cynical about donations to the sysop; for in the face of all reality, he needs the money for the phone lines. Beware of viruses.

Take kindly to the counsel of Phil Katz and Chuck Forsberg, gracefully admitting that they know more than you will ever learn. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you from sudden hard disk crashes. But do not distress yourself with needless worry. Many fears are born of fatigue from being connected all night to ExecPC. Register your shareware.

You are a child of the Universe, you have a right to buy a 9600 V-Series Hays. And whether or not it is clear to you, the communication program is understandable. Read the docs.

Therefore be at peace with the sysop, no matter what a jerk he is, and whatever your BBS plans may be, go with your spouse to dinner occasionally.

With all its bad documentation, high registration fees, and aborted downloads, it is still better than paying for commercial software. Be cheerful. Strive to pay your phone bill.

(With apologies to the anonymous author of *Desiderata*.)

By Tom Scott
reprinted from *Telecomputing*

A Guide to Multi RADing

Amiga Tutorial by Larry Lack

From the Newsletter of the Amiga Users of the Heartland

Who needs more than one RAD:?

Darned if I know, Bunky. But if you feel like you need two or more RAD: devices for quick response on those two-disk games, elaborate startups, or a way to control memory used by RAD: here's how.

First you will need some tools for surgery. NewZap or a word processor/editor that will handle binary (as opposed to strictly ASCII) files. A copy of your boot disk containing RemRAD in the C directory and RAMDrive.device in the DEVS directory, along with a few free blocks. Scrub up, intern, we're getting ready to operate!

In the December issue of Amiga Resource, Sheldon Leemon's Best of the Boards column was about using NewZap. He had a few paragraphs about using it to create multiple RADs that titillated my curiosity (OK, so it don't take much to titillate me.)

Let's get down to it, shall we? This example will create two extra RADs, using my chosen names. To simplify the explanation, you will first need to make two copies of RemRAD and name them "RemRD0" and "RemRD1". Also, make two copies of RAMDrive.device and name them "RD0Drive.device" and "RD1Drive.device". Halfway there!

From your editor or NewZap, load "RD0Drive.device". In that file, search for and change all occurrences of "ramdrive.device" to "RD0Drive.device". Then search and replace "RAMB0" with "RAMD0". Save this file. Load "RD1Drive.device". Similarly, search for and change "ramdrive.device" to "RD1Drive.device". Then search and replace "RAMB0" with "RAMD1". Save this file. Halfway there! (You could quit now if you modified your MountList, but you would never be able to get rid of either

RD0: or RD1: without cutting your power cord.)

Now load "RemRD0" and search for "ramdrive.device". Change it to read "RD0drive.device". Save this file. Now load "RemRD1" and search for "ramdrive.device". Change it to read "RD1drive.device". Save this file. Halfway there!

Now use a word processor/editor that loads & saves ASCII files and load the DEVS/MountList file. Block copy the RAD: entry twice. Edit them to reflect the names RD0: and RD1:. Adjust the other parameters as necessary. Save this file. Halfway ... no, we're done!

Two quick notes before I forget. As best as I remember, ED in your C directory doesn't handle binary files, but Edit will. Most editors will work with binary files. Generally speaking, you don't want to change the length of a binary file. You can name the RAD devices (RD0 & RD1) or volumes (RAMD0 & RAMD1) to anything you want, but if you change the length of the file, you may be in trouble, so stick to the same number of characters in the names. NewZap is handy at times, but it deals more directly with disk sectors. These are small files and any editor will do fine.

In a nutshell; name both the file, ramdrive.device, and all the references to it that are in the file, the EXACT same thing. Then the references in the copy of RemRAD need to be changed to reflect the name of the file in the DEVS directory.

Now you can mount RAD:, RD0:, and RD1:, Whoopie! On the downside, when removing the devices with the RemRAD command, sometimes I get a nasty visitor (GURU). Maybe one of the tech types can exterminate this bug.

The METCOM 90 Advertising Flyer

Enclosed in this newsletter is a flyer advertising METCOM 90. We are counting on our membership to help advertise this event. If you know of someplace you can place this flyer where it might do some good, please put it there. Remember - admission is free and we welcome guests.

Thought For The Month

*Opportunity always knocks at the
least opportune moment.
... Ducharme*

Amiga By-The-Loop

Brent Wood

First a word to our chapter president: GET WELL! (O.K. two words.) David is recovering from surgery and I am helping out with his duties as president until October. However, from the looks of things on the BBS, he appears to be relaxing with his computer. I think I'll get this ingrown toe-nail removed. That should keep me off my feet for a while and I can lay around and compute all day.

The big item of interest at our last meeting was MetCom 90. And of course there is info about that plastered all over this newsletter. All volunteers are welcome to help out. Please contact Craig Bird or any other club officer to let us know how you can help.

We also started donations for a new shareware product called SID. SID is a full-featured directory utility that is worth a look. It is fully user configurable to use your favorite utilities. SID is available on the club SuperDisk collection on the Workbench Utilities 2 disk. Donate a buck or two and when we get a respectable amount we'll send it to the author.

If you missed the last meeting you missed a look into AmigaVision, the latest entry into the multi-media arena from Commodore.
David

Johnson,
store
manager of
Amazing
Computer in Fort
Worth, showed us
around the program and

gave us a glimpse of the power this program has to assemble graphics, sound and animations for presentations and interactive programs. With just a few clicks of the mouse you can put together several different animations and play music at the same time. David made the program seem very easy and assured us that we all could do the same things with very little work. Thanks David. As always, we appreciate it when our local dealers come out to demonstrate new products. And David had already made this presentation at two other chapter meetings last month.

Thanks For The Doorprizes

These doorprizes were given away at the August meetings.

Amiga North Dallas Chapter:
Evil Garden
...donated by Amazing

Our next meeting will be September 11th. I'll be calling the meeting to order at 7:30 so don't be late.

Amiga Central Jack Smith

Our meeting began with the customary demo of the shareware product of the month, the wonderful SID utility program by Timm Martin. In my opinion SID is the best friend an Amiga owner can have and can replace a least a dozen CLI commands like "copy", "type", "rename", "delete", etc.. SID can be found on the popular club SuperDisks along with all the other great shareware programs.

Following the SID demo, the question & answer session and rumors report the

crowd settled back for the featured event, a hardware exposition by the newest member of the fast growing Amiga hardware community, Applied Engineering. Applied Engineering has long been known as the premier hardware developer for the Apple][computer line and has now expanded their product line to include the Amiga. Unlike other manufactures who often enter the market with a single new product, AE has fired a broadside into the Amiga market place with not one but seven new products within the last two months! They were on hand to demonstrate all the new stuff and field the barrage of questions from the members. Leading off was the first high density 3.5" drive available for the Amiga. The drive offers the Amiga a drive that is capable of supporting both 1.5 Meg and the normal 880K formats. The nearly silent drive is a technical masterpiece with an intelligent disk eject that prevents accidental premature removal before AmigaDOS is finished reading or writing on the disk. Although hardware is their strong suite AE also supports their innovative designs with top notch software support that is fully 2.0 compatible too. High on the list of improvements suggested by the members was a slimmed down version that could be installed internally and could read the IBM 1.44 format.

Following the new drive AE rolled out their line of modems. Starting with the base models, an internal or external 2400 baud unit, the upgrade path includes MNP-5 data compression, send-fax and soon receive-fax options. Did you notice the word "upgrade"? Yes fans, AE offers an upgrade path on almost every product they make, and most are user installable.

Moving on to yet another item, AE displayed 2 new memory boards, one for the Amiga 500 and another for the 2000/3000's. The Amiga 500 gets a new 501 clone half-meg card while the 2000 gets a 0 to 8 meg board. The RamWorks 2000 board allows memory expansion in 1/2 meg increments and an on-board auto-configuration that eliminates dip switch settings and jumpers. As time was drawing short, AE had to rush

through the last item, a new improved Amiga 500 power supply to power all these new goodies. Check out their ads in Amiga World for more details.

The balance of the meeting was devoted to a viewing a video taken a few days earlier at SigGraph 90. If you missed it, it will be shown again at the next meeting and copies can be obtained from Jack Smith.

Amiga North Dallas Genny White

Hey! We're growing! If you can believe the little pie chart in the last newsletter, our chapter is now the **LARGEST** of the MCCC groups! We've rapidly outgrown our first meeting place, and will meet next month in a new room (same building) to improve the member/chair ratio. Commodore has recently heard about us and is very pleased, and promises support. If all of us show up at METCOM (OK, North Dallas, Arlington isn't THAT far away for something this special!), it should be a record-breaker. Once again, we are reminded to contribute to the ShareWare jar, as these developers contribute so much to US. Spotlights in August was SID, a fine what-is-it, where-is-it, show-it-to-me, put-it-somewhere-else program.

(I know there's a better term for this, but that's what it DOES, and it does it WELL.) It's on a superdisk in our library... check it out. I keep seeing it

unobtrusive little window on our screen, waiting for someone to need quick access to one of its

multitudinous functions (even allows access to a calculator).

We were treated to TWO presentations this month, the first from Danny Barnett, a Nervous User. (Didn't show, really, Danny.) It's great to have a demo from "One of Us", showing off how he uses some of the products we've heard about. ANYONE out there with something to share is welcome to contact the officers and arrange to show us the tricks he/she has taught his/her Amiga. Danny, a self-styled "sound packrat", gave us a music and sound demo. He began with a nifty original composition created in Sonix. Then he illustrated the two available sources of sound: created with waveforms, etc. (via Sonix or Synthia), or sampled directly from an outside source. One sample he brought was a segment of sound effects he had created for a Japanese animation... we "watched" the bad guy exchange blows and fall off a cliff in the waveform displayed on the screen. Then, using an "Advanced Midi Amiga Sampler" (AMAS) device and Audiomaster software (Aegis), he sampled a few measures of a guitar intro off a CD and trimmed it down to a single note. Voila: an instrument is born! He then proceeded to plug "our" instrument in place of one in his composition, which sounded awful but very clearly made his point. He has 3 "sound collections" in our library, which gets me thinking about some wierd projects... hmmm. Where could I put that scream in my next song? Thanks, Danny! Great show!

The second demo was from our ever-popular video guru and new Vice President Bob Shary. Bob's presentation was another "sampling" concept: he demonstrated the Frame Grabber, which can accept live video (or from a tape) and digitize a single image on your cue. This image can then be played with in a paint program, etc. Handy, he says, for such things as fancy transitions in weddings or commercial videos.

Defaults are 320 X 400 resolution and 4096 colors, which

looked great, although higher resolution might create an interesting effect... depends on your objective. With my next million dollars, I'm gonna get all this stuff he brings in and start doing some serious video stuff. (Actually, the Frame Grabber is under \$600.)

Next Month a real treat: the Disney Animation Studio will be presented by Forrest McKinney. Be there! Also... start thinking about anything you may want to buy/sell/trade at Metcom. Software with all the documentation, etc. that you've outgrown or don't want can be offered for sale at the flea market, and I imagine hardware will be everywhere. They're expecting maybe 1000 attendees: be one of them! See you at our next meeting -- Wednesday, September 19th, 7:30 p.m.

Fort Worth Julia Sookma

Even though summertime can sometimes cause club attendance to dwindle, our August meeting saw a favorable turnout. Telecommunications was the subject of our latest meeting.

Interestingly enough, while preparing for the upcoming meeting, John Sookma discovered a message from our former chapter president Richard Meyer on Q-Link. Richard has moved to Dolan Springs, Arizona and reports he is doing well. He sends his regards to everyone.

Topics covered in the discussion ranged from the definition of telecommunications to the various types of modems and terminal programs available. James Dunnam talked about materials needed to set up for use of a modem. He also made available for viewing three different types of modems he owns. James gave characteristics, advantages and disadvantages of each modem. He also discussed two terminal programs, VIP and BobsTerm.

Donald Tate gave a short presentation on two modems. A terminal program he likes is Touch Term 6.2.

John Sookma discussed a modem

and terminal program, MultiTerm. John also showed a printout of news stories downloaded from Q-Link. He also displayed the Q-Link Public Domain Software Directory and reminded us that use of a modem could connect us to this plethora of software available from Q-Link.

Bill Aiken gave an impromptu discussion on StarText (a service offered by the Fort Worth Star-Telegram). Some of the things offered on StarText are an encyclopedia, up-to-date news articles, and his favorite, the Today Column. This column gives many events that have occurred in history on that particular date. Another service offered on StarText is the availability of next-day classified ads after 6 pm! This could give you a head start on those items for sale or garage sale locations.

On the whole, our chapter meeting was very informative and enlightening. There were some very knowledgeable folks there who shared some very useful information. We hope to see you at our next meeting on September 8 at our new location, West Berry Church of Christ on W. Berry just east of University.

H.E.B.

Robyn Wilson

At the August 18th meeting Superbase 64 was discussed.

There were many interested people wanting to hear of

this database system for the Commodore 64 and 128. This is one of the two programs that were donated to our club

by a software company about a year ago. Okley Moss talked about both versions. He made an actual address file and showed how to call up different files by using just one key word. Superbase's many utilities were discussed also.

The next meeting will be held on September 15th at 1:30 pm at the Hurst Recreation Center on Mary Drive. For those of you who are tired of cludging along with an IBM PC and want to really do some work on your files - boy is this a program for you! This program will transfer data from an MS-DOS computer system to a Commodore system and back. This is going to be a very informative program whether or not you need to do any of these functions.

VidSIG

Jack DeTore

METCOM is on its way. Each year, the vice-president of MCCC has the responsibility for the METCOM (Metroplex Computer Conference) event. At the initial organizational meeting, Craig Bird led the discussion on the many tasks which started with selecting a theme for the show. The winning theme was timely and simple, and clearly Amiga -- "Multimedia Now". (At this point I had the distinct feeling that somehow VidSIG was going to get more involved in METCOM 90). The date was set for October 13th.

The METCOM 90 staff developed as follows:

Director - Craig Bird
Publicity - Jeff Robinson
Booth Rentals - Craig Bird
Presentations/Speakers - Betty Clay
Registration - John Malmstrom
Equipment - Ned Kelly
MCCC Booth - Jesse Carden
Library - Gary Campbell
MCCC Booth Videos - Darrell Simmonds
Flea Market - Fred Noble
Door Prizes - Harold Williams

In addition, there will be a

VidSIG workshop room set up with the kind of gear that any video studio would be pleased to use. This room will have our VidSIG consultants, Dwayne Fletcher and Jack Smith available at various times during the day to discuss, demonstrate, innovate, and speculate about all the good things that can be done in the world of MultiMedia by letting Amiga be the integrating element.

Speaking of MultiMedia -- Betty Clay and Craig Bird are in touch with Commodore and have received word back that if CDTV is ready by METCOM 90, they will bring it along with demos, AmigaVision and more. Other presentations expected include Amiga artist, Marilyn Coughran, UTA Video Arts Professor Jim Pomeroy, and Gregg White, graphic video consultant with MicroSearch.

Yes, VidSIG has been busy behind the scenes getting ready for "the next one". Betty has been heading up the arrangements for the speakers and presentations. At the MCCC booth that will be centrally located in the main meeting room at the Arlington Convention Center, VidSIG members Darrell, James Rivers, and Mark and Connie Renfro will be set up to digitize members pictures with still and motion cameras, to print color T-shirt iron-on transfers with the digitized files or load them to members' diskettes. At the workshop in Meeting Room #1 hosted by Dwayne and Jack, get a chance to talk with visiting professionals in the video business.

That brings us to the news about the next VidSIG meeting. It will be at SimuFlite on Saturday afternoon September 22nd, between 1 pm and 5 pm. We will have an opportunity to see the way much of the new software and hardware can be integrated for super video productions. Jack Smith and Dwayne Fletcher will have an opportunity to dry run their METCOM*90 workshop -- and you'll be there to see it first! Maybe we can settle on how to spend some of the surplus donations that I've accumulated since VidSIG began this year. Before mailing this, our kitty had \$99.00!

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Secretary	Robyn Wilson	817-282-3458
Librarian	Anna Luedtke	817-377-4135

The Fine Print

The Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

Statement of Purpose

The Metroplex Commodore Computer Club is a not-for-profit organization devoted to the collection and dissemination of computer knowledge, to the encouragement of computer education, and to the use of Commodore computers in the home, at school, and in business.

Legal Stuff

The MCCC is not connected with Commodore Business Machines, Inc. Commodore and Commodore product names (PET, CBM, VIC, C64, C128, and Amiga) are registered trademarks of Commodore, Inc.

Meetings and Membership

Our meetings are open to all. Family membership dues are \$20 per year or \$12 for six months, and entitle the member to a monthly mailed copy of the MCCC News, free access to the club's extensive public domain and shareware software library, and discounts at many area merchants. An additional \$12 annual fee provides access to the MCCC multi-user Bulletin Board System.

The MCCC News

Copyright Information

Material printed in the MCCC News is not copyrighted unless so noted. Articles may be reprinted or otherwise distributed by other user groups or by individuals who may find it helpful as long as proper credit is given to the author and to the MCCC.

Advertising

The MCCC News accepts two kinds of advertising. Member ads are those which are submitted by a member and which are not of a commercial nature. There is no charge for member ads. Commercial ads are those which advertise multiple like items for sale. Rates for camera-ready commercial ads are as follows for a single month or (consecutive three months): Full Page - \$36 (\$96); Half Page - \$18 (\$48); Quarter Page - \$12 (\$32); Business Card - \$6 (\$16). Materials to be inserted will cost \$.08 per copy (duplication not included) and must be inserted into all newsletters for the month.

Articles

Members are encouraged to submit articles. Articles should be submitted as ASCII text. They may be uploaded to the MCCC BBS, to StarText (address "MCCC"), or on disk. If these methods are not possible, I will, as a last resort, accept printed articles. If graphics need to be included they may be submitted as Amiga IFF files, PageStream structured drawings, or, again as a last resort, printed output.

Deadline

The deadline for submissions to the MCCC News is the Monday following the third Saturday of each month. Payment must accompany all ad copy. Make checks payable to MCCC and mail to P.O. Box 813, Bedford, Texas 76095.

Extra Copies

Extra Copies of the MCCC News may be obtained for \$1 per copy. Orders should be forwarded to the club along with the required fee. Orders must be received by the regular newsletter deadline.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sept 8 Fort Worth Chapter
1:30 pm - West Berry Church of Christ
2701 West Berry, Fort Worth
John Sookma, 817-293-8691

Sept 8 Arlington/Grand Prairie Workshop
1:30 pm - Grand Prairie Library
Grand Prairie
Jerry Hiatt, 817-649-1358

Sept 11 Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
7:30 pm - N.Richland Hills Community Center
Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N.Richland Hills
David Owens, 817-577-2304

Sept 11 Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter
7:00 pm - Stoneridge Homeowners Assn. Clbhs.
500 Grants Parkway, Arlington
Glen Herring, 817-572-0489

Sept 15 Hurst-Euless-Bedford Chapter
1:30 pm - Hurst Recreation Center
Mary Drive South of Pipeline
Eldor Luedtke, Jr., 817-377-4135

Sept 19 Amiga North Dallas Chapter
7:30 pm - Richardson Civic Center
411 West Arapaho, Richardson
Craig Bird, 817-540-3360

Sept 20 Amiga Central Chapter
7:30 pm - Arlington Community Center
2800 S. Center, Arlington
Bill Keatley, 817-485-0666

Oct 6 MCCC Board of Directors
10:00 am - N.Richland Hills Community Center
Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N.Richland Hills
Ned Kelly, 817-277-5825

October Newsletter Deadline - September 17

NORMAL MEETING SCHEDULE

1st Sat	MCCC Board of Directors
2nd Tues	Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
2nd Tues	Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter
2nd Sat	Arlington/Grand Prairie Workshop

2nd Sat	Fort Worth Chapter
3rd Wed	Amiga North Dallas Chapter
3rd Thurs	Amiga Central Chapter
3rd Sat	HEB Chapter

MCCC NEWS

Metroplex Commodore Computer Club
P.O. Box 813
Bedford, Texas 76095

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